

# MASONIC CASKET.

BY EBENEZER CHASE.

*And now abideth FAITH, HOPE, CHARITY, these three; but the greatest of these is CHARITY."* ST. PAUL.

[No. X.] ENFIELD, N. H. SEPTEMBER, A. L. 5825. VOL. II.

## A DISCOURSE,

*Delivered before Friendship Lodge,  
at Gloucester, R. I.*

By the REV. JOHN L. BLAKE, A. M.

*As I passed by and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, To the Unknown God. Whom, therefore, ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.—Acts, xxvii. 28.*

ATHENS, and indeed the whole of Greece, was much given to idolatry. This city, in addition to the gods usually received by the Grecians, had adopted those of the Pagan nations generally, throughout Asia, Africa, and Europe. The objects of religious worship, which the deluded Athenians supposed worthy of divine honours, were so numerous, that it would be nearly impossible to give a complete catalogue of them. Suffice it to say, that they worshipped the luminaries of heaven, the sun, the moon, and the stars—they worshipped the elements of nature, the earth, the air, and the water—they worshipped the slumbering dead, whether illustrious for their virtues, or odious for their vices—they worshipped diverse portions of the animal world, the fowls of the air, the fish that frolic in the mighty deep, the beasts of the field, the insect that glitters only for a day, and the vilest reptile that crawls upon the ground. These, Brethren, were the gods of the proud Athens! For various of them, images have been set up;

VOL. II.

10

temples had been erected; altars had been consecrated; and religious rites had been instituted. It may be a matter of wonder and surprise, with some of you, that the people of this city, the most lofty eminence among the surrounding nations, were so blind, so ignorant, so deluded in the things of religion. They were wise in human science; but in divine knowledge they were—fools. Here is a mystery, which natural reason could never have comprehended—a mystery, however, which Revelation has fully made known. It is a primary doctrine of the Divine Oracles, that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.

As this doctrine has an intimate relation to our text, your attention is requested to the illustration of it, which will now be given. That heathen nations are the most grossly ignorant in religion, cannot be denied. What people, without revelation, have ever had a religion, at which reason, enlightened by revelation, would not revolt, with the greatest abhorrence! No such people, either ancient or modern, can be named. And it may be asked, why we are raised so much above the ancient Athenians, in things that are spiritual! Many of them were far, very far superior to us, in worldly eminence; and how does it happen that we surpass them in every thing of a moral nature! How does it happen, that we, their inferiors in human knowledge, are

exempt from that darkness, absurdity, and folly in religion, which will be an eternal disgrace to the Athenian name! Indeed further. Why are we not bowing down, in humble adoration, to the shining hosts of heaven! Why are we not offering our prayers at the tombs of the mouldering dead! Why are we not burning incense in honor of the meanest animal existences on the face of the earth! The doctrine stated can alone unfold the mystery. The wisdom of this world attains not to the knowledge of the true God. The Athenians were destitute of Revelation—they were literally, notwithstanding all their worldly wisdom, in the valley and shadow of death, as to divine things. But to us the day spring from on high has appeared—on us the Son of Righteousness casts his glorious beams. Here the mystery vanishes! It is because the light of eternal truth directs our footsteps in the way of heaven. The holy Scriptures, the Word of the everlasting and unchangeable Jehovah, have raised us from such a state of moral degradation. They have removed from our land that moral darkness and moral wretchedness, which prevail where the gospel is not known.

Some persons, in Christian countries, pretend to think meanly of the Bible, and of the ordinances of the Christian religion, thereby, exalting their own wisdom above the wisdom of God, as it is made manifest in revelation; but these persons should know, that no small portion of that light and knowledge, which they possess, came from the very book which they so much despise. Has not this same fountain of instruction been open to them, ever since they came into existence! It cannot be denied. Were the natural sun always to shine, in one bright and

uninterrupted day, many not knowing or sufficiently keeping in mind, that all material light comes from the sun, might possibly suppose, that the world would be light enough, did the sun not exist. Thus it is in matters of religion. Some, who have beheld, without interruption, all their days, the moral light, that shines from the Bible, forgetting that all true wisdom thus proceedeth from above, even from God, are inclined to suppose, that we might do very well without religion or the Bible. We naturally think little of benefits that we have always enjoyed. We are alike unmindful of their excellency and the giver of them, till taken from us. Who knows the value of a good civil government, that has never lived under a bad one! But, Brethren, let us not lightly esteem the Bible and the religion which it contains, because we live in a land where this treasure is possessed. Had those in Christian countries, who pretend to despise the Bible and the religion thereof, been born and educated among heathens, instead of their present boasted wisdom, their ideas on moral subjects would probably have been as debased and grovelling as those of the Asiatic Hindoo or the African Hottentot. How wretched and deplorable is the condition of those nations, which are now destitute of the revealed Word of God!

As interesting and as profitable however, as might be additional observations, in the same connexion, it was my intention to call your attention particularly to the words of the text. The occasion renders that intention altogether proper. The Athenians apparently not satisfied with the long catalogue of heathen gods, which they had acknowledged, built an altar to the unknown God, which



Paul observed, as he passed thro' their city. There are different opinions concerning this altar of the Athenians. It has been supposed by some, that after they had multiplied their deities to so great a degree, as stated, it was suspected, there might still be one God of whom they had no distinct knowledge, superior to all their idols, and were, therefore, induced to erect an altar, which they inscribed to the Unknown God. And it has been supposed, by others, that as the Athenians had altars dedicated to the various heathen nations with which they were surrounded, this was erected to the God of the Jews, who was always spoken of as invisible and incomprehensible, and whose very name the Jews themselves scrupled to mention. Without deciding which of these opinions is most probable, it is evident that the Athenians had built an altar to a God, of whose name and attributes they had no particular knowledge.—They must, therefore, have been ignorant of his laws and the service, which he required of them. But St. Paul, with his accustomed facility in seizing adventitious circumstances for an occasion to make known the word of life, took advantage of their superstition, by assuring them, that he came to preach this God, whom they ignorantly acknowledged. We might follow, with advantage, the Apostle of the Gentiles, in the address, which he delivered these idolaters; but our time is now too short to notice any subject not involved in the application of our text, which has been contemplated. Let us, then, meditate upon the superstition, and folly, and impiety of these Athenians, that we may avoid the errors into which they fell. Especially, let us so improve the superior light, with which we are favored, that they

may not rise up in judgment to our greater condemnation.

It is apprehended, that many, in these days of gospel light, act a part no less inconsistent and irrational than that of the Athenians named in our text. Do not many, who are admitted within the Masonic pale, make the institution, so far as every thing of a moral nature is considered, an Altar to the unknown God!—Do not many, professing themselves good Masons, neglect altogether the moral tendency and moral principles of the Masonic fraternity, and confine their attention to the ceremonial part of the Order! Every person professes his belief in God, when he is made a Mason; but if this is done without realizing what such a profession implies—if a person professes his belief in God, and is ignorant of the character of God, is ignorant of the relation in which he stands to God—is unmindful of the duties, which God requires of him in consequence of that relation, does he not raise an altar, like the Athenians, to the *unknown* God! The Athenians virtually acknowledged the existence of God, and what does this person more than they! Does he live as though he believed what he professed any more than they did! Does he contemplate and admire the divine perfections and glory, till his own soul is changed into the same image of moral excellence! Has he such a conviction of the eternal and Almighty power of God, as to dread his displeasure as certain destruction! Has he such a continual apprehension of God's omniscience and omnipresence, as to conduct, at all times, as if before Him with whom we have to do! Does he so revere the revealed word of God, as to make it the rule of all his actions! Does he so believe in the promises and denunciations annex-



ed to the law of God, as to flee that which is evil and choose that which is good! Or, alas, does he remain the same imperfect and sinful creature, that he was before making such a profession, living as if there were no God in the universe—as if there were no state of existence beyond the grave, no judgment, no heaven, no hell!

Every Mason, who maintains a consistent character, will make it manifest by his life, that he does believe in God. It is truly, brethren, no trifle—no unmeaning form of words to make that profession of which we are speaking. It is the very foundation of those moral principles, by which every member of the Masonic Fraternity is supposed to be governed; and, on this foundation, we behold a superstructure, surpassed in beauty, excellency, and utility, only by Christianity itself.—Thus built upon a recognition of the existence and providence of God, carrying within her bosom, as a sacred deposit, his revealed Word, and raising her voice, with frequent and devout prayer, for the light and guidance of his Spirit, Masonry may be truly called a Christian Institution. And it cannot, moreover, be denied, that Masonry embraces various of the fundamental doctrines of divine truth, and inculcates some of the best moral, social, and benevolent principles, of which our nature, in the present state, is susceptible. It connects the whole race of Adam, in one great family, of which God is the great and common Parent; and then requires, in all her lectures, and symbols, the performance of every corresponding obligation. As her members are all imperfect and need mutual forbearance, she recommends that charity, which covereth a multitude of sins; and, as they are alike

liable to accident and worldly poverty, she recommends that philanthropy, which embraceth, within its arms, every object of compassion, throughout the wide creation. Let not, then, an institution so good, suffer injury by the destruction of the foundation on which it stands. But if you permit the profession, under consideration, to become an idle and unmeaning ceremony, the foundation is destroyed; and, then, the superstructure thereon, notwithstanding its excellency, like the house on the sand, will crumble to certain and complete ruin.

Allusion has been made to the well known use, among Masons, of the holy Scriptures. It is presumed that nearly every person present, knows that the Bible is kept in every Masonic Hall, that it is carried in all her solemn processions, that its divine contents are always thrown open in our Lodges, and that over its sacred pages the most serious transactions are conducted. This reverent reception and use of the divine Oracles, among Masons, may be considered conclusive evidence, that the institution of Masonry is a Christian institution.—For would an institution opposed to, or at variance with Christianity, cherish within its very bosom the Book that makes known Christianity! It cannot be presumed. But while Masonry thus declares her allegiance to Christianity, what is to be expected of her sons!—Is Masonry a Christian institution, and shall her sons ever be infidels! Does Masonry profess an attachment to the gospel of Christ, and shall any of her sons ever set at naught and contemn, by profligate and irreligious lives, the doctrines and moral maxims of that gospel!

Since the sacred writings are kept and spread open in all Lodges, it is a most reasonable expect-



ation, that every Mason will make it his study and constant endeavour, to do whatever this heavenly Instructor commends, and avoid what it condemns. Is the Bible recognized by Masonry, as a book from the great Fountain of light and goodness, that her members may partake therein, or is it merely for outward parade and show! Is it thus recognized, that they may be taught to depart from that which is evil, and cleave to that which is good, or is it, alas, all hypocrisy, and a cloak for greater excesses in wickedness! While good Masons know the former to be true, those, who are unfriendly to the institution will believe the latter. We might, Brethren, as well and as consistently, raise an idol within our Halls, to one of the heathen deities; or, like the Athenians, place over our doors an altar to the unknown God, as to spread open the Bible therein, unless we receive this divinely inspired Book in spirit and in truth—unless we treasure it up in our hearts, and let it influence and govern our lives. Let us, then, on entering our Lodges, and beholding the Bible opened before us, reverently consider it as a message from God! Every sentence should be viewed, as a voice audibly addressed to us, from heaven. Its denunciations against impurity and sin, should commend themselves to our consciences, as if attended by the immediate sanctions of him, before whom the wicked melt like wax and flee away. And its precious promises should be received with that lively faith in Christ, which imparts joy unspeakable and full of glory, and hope, like an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast.

It is well known also, by those, who are not Masons, as well as by those who are, that prayers on different occasions are introduced

into our Lodges. This is well known, because these prayers are printed in Masonic books. I mention the introduction of prayer into our Lodges, as additional evidence, that Masonry is a religious institution, as well as to notice some apprehended abuses of the practice. Arguments are not wanted, at this time, to prove the propriety and importance of this Christian duty. Prayer is one of the first dictates of all religion—natural as well as revealed. No sooner do we have an idea of God, who is over all—on whom we are dependant and to whom we are accountable, than we are inclined, by acts of religious homage and veneration, to conciliate his favour and benediction. No sooner do we become sensible of the infinite wisdom and superintending Providence of God, than we are impressed with the importance of supplicating the light and guidance of his spirit. And in our Lodges, it is peculiarly proper, to supplicate that wisdom, which is from above and is necessary to direct; and that grace, which sanctifies the heart, and prepares us for the performance of every moral duty. Masonry commemorates the building of King Solomon's Temple. This beautiful and stupendous edifice was the offspring of prayer. In prayer it was begun; in prayer it was completed; and in prayer it was dedicated to God. Well, then, may an institution, which commemorates this work of piety, require her members, with devout affection, to come before the supreme Ruler of the universe. But while I commend the practice under consideration, may I not ask if the prayers in our Lodges are offered with that solemnity, and circumspection, and reverence, which become sinful man, when he approaches the Majesty of heaven? If we address a *form* of prayer to



God, without realizing the sentiments thereof—without feeling and exercising a *spirit* of prayer, do we not raise an altar to the unknown God? We could give no more satisfactory reason for *thus* offering the *form* of a prayer to God, than the Athenians could have done for the building of the altar mentioned in our text.—Prayer is the desire of the heart—an aspiration of the soul. No form of words without this desire and aspiration can be considered *real* prayer—that acceptable offering, which the Christian presents unto God.

Moreover, do not persons repeat the *forms* of prayer, in our Lodges, who never *think* of a prayer at any other time or place? It is apprehended, that there is too much cause for such an interrogation. It is apprehended, that persons sometimes come into our lodges and repeat these forms of prayer, who never *once* before in their whole lives attempted to pray; and, who are then engaged in this service, which should be performed with all possible seriousness, solemnity, and sincerity, with as much unconcern, and irreverence, as the Athenians beheld, when passing by it, their altar to the unknown God. But, Brethren, will that God, who cannot be deceived, and will not be mocked, look with complacency on such a service as *this*! Will he be pleased with this outside, hypocritical, and vain shew! Will he bestow his favour and spirit in answer to prayer that is a solemn mockery! No, he looks at the heart—it is the broken, the contrite, and devout soul, in which he delights.—Let us, then, in the devotional exercises of our Lodges, manifest deep humility and true sincerity—let us bow ourselves in godly penitence and lively faith, and our prayers will rise before the throne of God

as sweet incense, and the lifting up of our hands will be unto him an acceptable sacrifice.

I will again call your attention to a remark already made. The remark to which I allude is this, that Masonry commemorates the building of Solomon's Temple. This temple was made of the best materials, and it was designed altogether for pious purposes. Masonry also, in order to be a fit representation of this Temple should be made of choice materials—none but the virtuous and good should be admitted into it; and it should be a school in which are taught the duties of piety as well as those of justice and benevolence. Are the the licentious, the irreligious, and the profane, the fit representations of the tall and beautiful Fir and Cedar of the valley—the fit representations of the glory of Lebanon? And is a Masonic Lodge, that admits within its enclosures levity and intemperance, a fit representation of those pure and heavenly exercises, which were performed on Mount Moriah! Let us look well, Brethren, to this. Those who are not Masons scrutinize much more closely the characters of our members, and the doings of our Lodges, so far as they are known, than they do the professed principles of the Order. It is in the lives of Masons, and not in printed books, that they will look for proof that the Masonic Institution is good. They will be inclined to judge of it, on common received maxims, that the tree is known by its fruit. Hence many pronounce the institution bad, because some of her members are irreligious and immoral; and because some of our Lodges are the occasions of sensuality and profanity. Is this indeed true! Is such an opportunity given for reproach! Oh, tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of As-



Belon) I, however, by no means, admit, that this, under all circumstances, is a correct rule for passing judgment. If it were, the Christian system might, in like manner, be condemned! For, not a few, who bear the Christian name, and make a Christian profession, exercise none of the virtues and graces, which form the Christian character. I, therefore, thus notice this subject, that all Masons may be induced to apply the proper remedy for an evil so much to be deprecated.

In view of the remarks made, it may well be concluded, that Masonry is, in no sense, opposed to Christianity, notwithstanding that many nominal Masons are a disgrace to the name they bear. Masonry may be considered an handmaid to Christianity; and the person, who is a *dishonor* to the Christian church, is no *honor* to the Masonic Fraternity. It may be asked, then, if the good Mason is not *almost* the good Christian!

It is by no means insinuated, that Masonry, under any circumstances, can supercede the necessity of Christianity. If Masonry inculcates the practice of the same duties, which are required in the gospel of Christ, it cannot administer those divine hopes and consolations, which are therein bro't to light. Peace of conscience and assurance of future glory spring only from a living faith in the Son of God.—And, besides, the moral precepts of Masonry are only like the light of the moon, which are borrowed from the sun—they are borrowed from the sacred Oracles. Masonry is only, therefore, considered the lesser light in the moral system, to lead men to virtue and happiness.

I should do the text injustice were I not to notice the conclu-

ding part of it. Whom, therefore, ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. I did not come here, Brethren, to eulogize Masonry; but I came here as a minister of Christ, to persuade you to the love and service of that God, who is recognised in Masonry. If God winks at the superstition and wickedness of the heathens, he commands all men under the light of the gospel to repent and turn to him. God, my Brethren, demands our love, our homage, and our service; and he has a right to them, for in him we live and move and have our being. He is as much entitled to our love, our homage, and our service, as the parent is entitled to the love respect, and service of the children whom he feeds, clothes, and protects. And if any withhold their love, reverence and service from God, they are as much guilty, and criminal, and indeed more, than the children who neglect to love, honor and serve their kind and indulgent parents.—Let the inquiry be made, if our belief in God is a belief of the heart, and if we have become his sincere and faithful servants, or have we only raised an altar to the unknown God!—The inquiry is a most important one, for most important consequences are involved in it—consequences no less important than the well-being of the institution of which we are members—consequences no less important than our own eternal well-being.

Finally—Let consistency and godly sincerity be exhibited in the life of every Mason.—Let us be what our tenets, our lectures, and our symbols would lead persons to suppose we should be. Be perfect, Brethren; and let faith in Christ be the foundation of your perfection. And to your faith add



virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity—knowing this, that so far as you maintain the Christian character in its purity you become good Masons, good husbands, good fathers, good companions and good citizens. Thus, may this lodge exhibit a large degree of that order, decency, and piety, which characterize the heavenly world and thus may all the members be made meet to partake in the unfading and eternal glory of the righteous—which may God grant; and to the king eternal, immortal, and invisible, the only wise God our Saviour, be all honor and praise, both now and evermore.—AMEN.

#### AN ADDRESS,

*On the 1st Degree of Masonry; pronounced in Mohawk Lodge, No. 266, Minden, Jan. 1, 1825; by Br. HENRY FAILING, JUN. of St. Johnsville, Montgomery county.—Published in pursuance of a vote of the Lodge.*

The task assigned me was more readily undertaken than faithfully performed; and I assure my Brethren, that the subject is much greater than is generally imagined. Having no opportunity to examine any author who had treated on "Speculative Masonry," I labored under an embarrassment, which I hope may not be experienced by others who may follow me on a similar occasion.

The opinions I have formed on the subject may therefore be peculiar to myself; but should any of them be deemed at variance with the original landmarks of our order, I humbly solicit that

the error may be attributed to the head, and not to the heart of the speaker.

As my attention is directed to the first degree of Masonry, I proceed to take a view of our first parents, who enjoyed that pure innocence which they received from the Original Fountain; tracing their steps until they committed a crime, the folly of which we have still reason to deplore. Their fall severed that affliction, that unity of heart, and above all, that charity, which is the brightest ornament of social compact. In his depraved state, it was but natural to suppose that man, now left to the vanity of his own imagination, was incapacitated "to subdue his passions, or limit his desires within due bounds;" he had no regard for his neighbor, and sought only for his own gratification and delight.

Thus was the idea of a Supreme Governor soon lost; the Creator was forgotten in the creature; mental depravity prevailed to its utmost extent; and had not the compassion of the Supreme Architect extended over the work of his hands, this world would have presented a horrible scene of deformity, only exceeded where the vengeance of disobedience is poured on its first and greatest offenders, who have "passed the orient of pardon." Now were mankind delivered over to discord, hatred, fear and superstition; and soon do we behold them delighted in viewing "their grim idol, smeared with human blood."

The progress of man, groping in the darkness of heathen superstition, and delivered therefrom by the enlightened influence of revelation forms a strong resemblance to that of the candidate who receives this degree. The mental obscurity which enveloped unhappy man and arrived to its



utmost density, and the inquiring mind was continually tortured with ignorance and doubt, when a dim light was discovered, which opened, a hope of relief through this medium, man discovered his deficiency, but he had no instructor. Nature at length proposed problems, and a desire to obtain their solutions caused the first attempt to obtain knowledge. Futurity being hidden from his view, the only reason leading him to believe that he had a soul, originated by his reflecting on the works of creation, and the vicissitudes of the seasons, "the seeming death and revival of nature;" hence was derived a faint anticipation of the soul's existence in a future state. But ignorance had bound him to superstition, and his feet were unprepared to tread the rough paths of life; thus man stood before the door of wisdom, an object of pity and distress, till the second trial was made in his favor. Here infinite compassion beheld his lamentable state, and opened a way for his entrance. Surrendering his former prejudices, he gratefully embraced the offered privilege, and received the benefit of instruction in those plans of improvement which had received the sanction of ages.

It is difficult to fix the precise date of that period, when the light of science first shed its benign influence upon mankind. A disregard to the precepts of Divine authority caused their almost total destruction, when only Noah and his family were saved from all the race of man. But no sooner did they again multiply after the flood than wickedness also increased, and objects of idolatry augmented, till a general dispersion took place, by the confusion of tongues at the tower of Babel.

Even the peculiar favor and protection shown by Heaven to the ancient Israelites; the miracles wrought for their delivery from Egyptian bondage, the pillar of fire by night, and a cloud by day, which guided them in their wanderings; yea, even Sinai's burning mount, and its awful thunders rolling loud and long, did not restrain the depravity of that people; and various instances are left on record, to show the depth of that moral corruption in which they were plunged.

The first token of the existence of our order that I can discover among the Jews, prior to the building of King Solomon's temple, is when having Saul in his power, was advised to slay him, but refused, saying: "Who can stretch out his arm against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless?" This astonished his companion, who, (as well as Saul,) acted under the ceremonial law, which declared it to be right to exchange "eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth."

(To be continued.)

---

#### EXTRACT FROM AN ORATION.

*Pronounced by Br. Winslow C. Watson, before Plattsburgh Chapter and Clinton Lodge—June 24, 1825.*

The apologists and disciples of despotism would justify the proscription and persecution, which have characterised the history of our institution, by urging that the purposes of masonry are political, that it tends to the subversion of regal power and human government.



Those, who are most familiar with the genius of masonry, know how utterly incompatible the feuds of faction, and the excitement of political conflicts are with the first principles of its system. The indulgence of passions, which tend to destroy a harmony of sentiment, and the bond of fraternal affection, would strike at the roots of our institution. When despotism urges these imputations upon us, she seems to have forgotten the venerable antiquity of masonry. She seems to have forgotten that the acacia has flourished, not only upon the ruins of the cabals and factions, which have agitated the world, but on the graves of the empires, whose destinies she alledges we would have controlled. All combinations of men calculated to subserve political purposes, must, from the very nature of their constitution, decay, when the objects, which engendered them, are consummated or defeated. They are as ephemeral as the passions or the interests that brought them into existence. This position is equally warranted by the suggestions of common sense, as it is an established axiom of political wisdom. How barefacedly preposterous then the idea

is rendered that supposes principles, which seem to career above the elements of human passion, and are unaffected by the revolutions of human power, could descend to participate in the grovelling interests and degrading contests of political rivalries. But the whole history of this institution affords a tissue of triumphant refutation of these calumnies. Political tests have in no age constituted the criterion of masonic virtue or morality. The portals of masonry open to men of every political caste, and every christian denomination. The sovereign and the subject, the peasant and the noble, the freeman and the slave of despotism, the priest and the layman, the catholic and the protestant are alike the disciples of its principles, are equally endowed with its prerogatives, and together partake of its business.

That individuals have conspired under the fallacious pretences of masonic combinations, not merely to prostrate the government of their country, but to subvert the religion of their God, and to bury beneath their ruins all the principles of well-organized society and social virtue, and have succeeded in deceiving the world by



their pretensions, it is idle to deny. The obscene orgies, the deadly purposes, and unhallowed machinations of the illuminati of Europe, are as obnoxious to the spirit of masonry, as they are abhorrent to every thing that is august, venerable, and sacred in human institutions. To identify masonry with these monstrous excrescences upon society, would reveal a spirit, that would denounce the religion of Calvary, because some of its disciples and priesthood may have perverted the holy functions of their offices. To disclaim the sublime principles of masonry, because the German illuminati have contaminated Europe, would be as absurd as to cast from us the antidote of disease, because it may have been appropriated to the purposes of murder and suicide.

When I pronounce masonry in its very genius, abstracted from political influence, I allude to the immediate and ostensible power it has been contended it exercises upon the destiny of nations. Like the force of pre-eminent intelligence or transcendant genius it exerts a powerful moral influence, by the irradiation it sheds upon the minds of men, by the extension of the empire

of the intellect it promotes, and the august truth it reveals. Masonry discloses man in the moral nakedness of his nature; she penetrates the gauze that the distinctions of society have thrown around him, and she recognizes no pretensions, but those of virtue and morality. At the portals of her sanctuary wealth and grandeur are stripped of their pomp and parade, the robe of power falls from official rank, the diadem of the monarch is laid aside, "episcopacy is stript of her mitre," all men stand upon the LEVEL of equal rights and equal power. The sovereign, removed from the glare of dominion, grows humble as he contemplates the fallacy of ambition, and the frivolity of human empire. He is taught to reverence the rights of those, who are equal to himself, by the laws of God and the ordinances of nature. The subject, while he is taught the veneration due to majesty and to law, beholds the monarch cast in the same mortal mould, and endowed with the passions and frailties as himself. He here learns to appreciate the dignity of his nature, and the sanctity of his rights.

In this era of refinement, of intelligence, and of chris-



tian influence, it seems paradoxical, that the humble institution we this day commemorate, should be pursued by the same unrelenting proscription that has characterised the gloomiest ages. The extended principles of its system, and the illumination they diffuse, appear to be repugnant to the atrocious policy of that crowned conspiracy, whose influence broods like an incubus upon the body politic of continental Europe. In darkened and degenerate Spain and Italy, religious bigotry and political fanaticism have opened the flood-gates of the wildest persecution. The Autocrat of Russia, assuming the attitude of a benefactor, has endeavored, under the specious pretence of patronage, to crush the system of Masonry in his grasp. The arm of arbitrary power has suppressed our lodges; our brethren have been exiled from their altars, and their fire-sides; the sanctuaries of our order have been violated. The arbiter of Europe may control its destiny, thrones may tremble before his colossal power, dynasties may wither beneath his frown, he may subdue the physical energies of mankind by physical force, but thanks be to Heaven, the dominion

of the mind can be usurped by no human sceptre; the intellect and the conscience of man burst the trammels of earthly thralldom, and triumph over the power of earthly despotism. These constitute the empire of masonry. The despots of Europe may annihilate our visible altars; but while a mason survives, a living altar will be erected in the heart. They may preclude us from our sacred asylums; but in defiance of human majesty the sequestered wood, the desert cave, and the mountain cell, will re-echo the mason's anthem, and witness the solemnity of his rites. As well may despotism attempt to arrest the meteor's flight or quench the great luminary of Heaven; as well may human power attempt to extinguish the spark of immortality, as to endeavor to crush a spirit so intimately blended and deep-rooted in the best sensibilities of the heart, so admirable in its purposes, so omnipotent in its influence, and so universal in its extent. Masonry in all its tangible attributes, may be annihilated, the animal man may be destroyed; but, "They never fail, who die in a good cause—  
The block may soak their blood;  
Their heads be sodden in the sun—



Their limbs be strung to city  
gates and castle walls;  
But still their spirits walk a-  
broad."

EXTRACTS FROM ANCIENT RECORDS.  
(Continued from page 134.)

*The state of Masonry from Grand  
Master SELEUCUS NICATOR, to the  
death of HEROD THE GREAT.*

Seleucus Nicator proved an excellent Grand Master, founded the great Seleucia on the Euphrates for his deputy in the east; and in the west he built his stately capital city, the famous Antioch in old Syria, with the great grove of Daphne, a sacred Asylum.

Masonry flourished most in Egypt, where the Grecian architecture was highly admired, and where Ptolemy Soter, another of Alexander's generals, had set up his throne.

Many worthy artists arose in succession after the days of Ptolemy Soter, until at length Rome became the centre of learning and power, under Augustus, the illustrious Grand Master, with his deputy Agrippa, who erected the great portico of the Pantheon.

After this, masonry flourished in Jerusalem, and Herod became the greatest builder of his day, the patron or Grand Master of many lodges, and sent for the most expert Fellow Crafts of Greece to assist his own Jews.

He built the city Sebaste, formerly Samaria, with a curious little temple in it, like that of Jerusalem. He made the city Casarea the best harbour in Palestine, and built a temple of white marble at Paneas—the cities Antipatris, Phasaelis and Cypron, and the tower of Phasael at Jerusalem, not inferior to the Pharos of Alexandria, &c.

But his most amazing work was his rebuilding of the temple of Zerubbabel.

Herod, being in full enjoyment of peace and plenty, formed a design of new building the temple at Jerusalem, whereby he thought he should not only reconcile to himself the affections of the Jews, but also erect a monument of lasting honour to his own name. The temple, built after the return of the Jews from Babylonish captivity, though an admirable building, 500 years being elapsed since its erection, was greatly decayed, both by length of time, and also by the violence of enemies. Herod proposed to build the whole temple anew, and in a general assembly of the people, offered to them what he intended. But when he found them startled at the proposal, to deliver them from their fears, he told them he would not take down the old temple till he had all the materials ready for erecting a new one in its place; and accordingly he did forthwith set himself to make all manner of preparations for it; employing therein 1000 waggons for carrying of the stone and timber; 10,000 masons, besides labourers, to fit all things for the building, and marshalled them into lodges under 1000 Priests and Levites, skilful in all parts of architecture, to supervise and direct them in the work, himself acting as Grand Master, with his Wardens, Hillel and Shammai, two learned Rabbins of great reputation. In two years time, he had got all things ready for the building; and then, and not before, did he pull down the old temple to the very foundations.

The foot-stone of the new temple was levelled just forty-six years before the first passover of Christ's personal ministry, at which time the Jews told him, John, ii.



20. Forty and six years hath this temple been in building; for although then forty-six years had passed from the time it was begun; yet that part, which was most properly the temple, that is, that, which contained the holy place, the Holy of Holies in the east, and the porch in the west, through which was the passage leading to both, were finished, at an amazing cost, in the short space of one year and six months, and the rest designed by Herod, in eight years more; when the fraternity celebrated the Cape-stone, with great joy and in due form; and the king solemnized its dedication with great pomp and expense. And the day appointed for it falling in with the day of the year, when he first received the crown, augmented the solemnity.

A great number of masons were continued at work, for the carrying on the out-buildings, all the time of our Saviour's being here on earth, and for some years after, till the coming of Gesius Florus to be governor of Judea; when he caused 18,000 masons to be discharged at one time, which gave great offence to the Jews, and, perhaps, was one cause of those many mutinies and seditions, which at last drew on the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple with it; so that it seems very unjust to charge the masons with being the fomenters of those disturbances, for the want of employment; when all the Jews looked upon this behaviour of the Roman governor, as levelled not only against their temple, but their worship also.

Josephus describes the temple of Herod, (Lib. 15. Cap. 14.) as a most admirable and magnificent fabric of marble, set off with the greatest profusion of rich and costly decorations, and the finest building upon earth, since the days of

Solomon; Being much larger than the temple of Zerubbabel; besides the advantage of the Grecian style, and the Corinthian order of architecture, with all its later improvements.

But it was not completely finished, in all its apartments, till about six years before it was destroyed, viz. A. D. 64.

At length Augustus, having shut up the temple of Venus, for that ail the world was at peace; in the 26th year of his Empire, after the conquest of Egypt, the word was made flesh, or the Lord Jesus Christ Immanuel was born, the Great Architect or Grand Master of the Christian Church.

King Herod died a few months after the birth of Christ, and, notwithstanding his vast expense in masonry, he died rich.

After the birth of Christ, four years, or when Christ was going in his fourth year; the Christian Era begins, A. M. 4004, commonly called Anno Domini, — 1.

During the long reign of Augustus, the craft was well cultivated; worthy craftsmen were every where employed and encouraged, as well in Europe as in Asia, till his death, which happened at Nola, in Campania, after a glorious reign of forty-four years.

---

The following address was delivered by Br. James Henderson, M. D. in behalf of the Masonic Brethren assembled at Richmond, Va. on the 30th Oct. last, in honor of Gen. Lafayette:—

BROTHER LAFAYETTE:—A thousand times we have been informed by the generation that has gone before us, (and there are now within these walls many who can well testify) what a debt of gratitude is due to you from the brethren of this extensive republic.



Though you have been many years far distant from our favored land, we have never ceased to follow you with anxious attention—with tender regard—through a life *chequered* with unusual vicissitudes; rejoicing when you were happy and prosperous, lamenting when the hand of misfortune bore heavy upon thee.

We have seen, *brother*, that when providence smiled on you with unceasing complacency, you have forgot not that the poorest cottager, was your *fellow man*; who stretched forth to him the *right hand of fellowship*, and you kindly proffered him a *brother's* aid in rising to a level with the favorites of wealth and distinction: and when by a sad reverse, we mourned you immured in the dungeon of a despot; even there you were found the inflexible advocate of justice and of human rights, and with pride and delight we beheld you restored to freedom, coming forth adorned with a precious jewel, even a heart unsubdued by adversity, and steadily pointing to the amelioration of man.

We now rejoice, our most worthy brother; we sincerely rejoice in the opportunity afforded us of receiving you within the bosom of the peaceful sanctuary; we welcome you with all the good will, with all the fraternal affection, with every sentiment of profound respect, that can flow from the hearts of free and accepted masons.

Gen. Lafayette made an extempore and appropriate reply to the preceding address—returning the warmest acknowledgements for the honor which had been paid him, by a Craft which he so much approved, and by members whom he so highly respected.

#### TO PATRONS.

By a disappointment about pa-

per, the number for August was delayed until the last of the month, then printed on paper of a darker colour, since then, we have received a better quality, and now send the numbers for Aug. and Sept. together.

Two numbers more will finish the 2d vol. of the Masonic Casket, and as I do not expect to continue the work after this vol. is finished, I wish, to close the accounts for the Casket, as soon as may be. Those who have not paid, are requested to send me the ballance due, so that I can send a receipt in full with the last number.

Your strict attention to this will much oblige

Your Friend and Brother,

EBENEZER CHASE.

#### CONDITIONS.

1. The Casket is issued monthly, each number containing 16 octavo pages, and 12 numbers making a volume.
2. The price, if paid on the receipt of the first number, is 60 cts. a volume, or if not paid until the close of the volume, it is 70 cents.
3. Any person, who subscribes and pays for five sets, is allowed 20 per cent discount; and for ten sets the commission is 25 per cent. The Postage must be paid by the subscribers.

#### TO PRINTERS.

I have the pleasure to inform printers in this section of the country, that Mr. Rufus Perkins of this town has recently cast a brass receiving screw for my printing press, that answers as good a purpose, in my opinion, as any that can be made in any other place. Should printers be in want of any, I can recommend them to Mr. Perkins, who I think will make them as durable, handsome, and cheaper than any other person.

E. CHASE.



*From the Savannah Georgian.*

MASTER MASON'S HYMN.

*Composed by John H. Sheppard, Master of Lincoln Lodge.*

TUNE—GERMAN HYMN.

Ah! when shall we three meet like them,  
Who last were at Jerusalem;  
For *three* there were, and *one* is not—  
He lies where *Cassia* marks the spot!

Tho' poor he was, with Kings he trod;  
Tho' *great*, he humbly knelt to God.  
Ah! when shall those restore again,  
The broken link of friendship's chain?

Behold! where *mourning* beauty bent,  
In silence o'er his monument,  
And wildly spread in sorrow there,  
The ringlets of her flowing hair.

The future *Sons* of grief shall sigh,  
While standing round in mystic tie,  
And raise their hands ALAS! to heaven,  
In anguish that no hope is given.

From whence we came, or whither go,  
Ask me no more, nor seek to know.  
'Till *three* shall meet, who form'd like them,  
The GRAND LODGE at Jerusalem!

\*\*\*

WOMAN.

*The following lines, written extempore, are from the pen of  
Moses Y. Scott.*

There is a ray of love in woman's eye,  
That with its magic wins the soul it warms.  
There is a smile of beauty on her lips  
'That soft-beguiling, beckons to its banquet,  
But there's a mild serenity of virtue,  
That in this sunny paradise prevails,  
Hallows each charm, and awes profane approach.